

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 17, 2003 (Paper No. 13). Claims 21, 23 to 27, 51, 53 to 57 and 64 are in the application, of which Claims 21, 51 and 64 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 21, 23 to 26, 51, 53 to 56 and 64 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent 5,987,506 (Carter). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested, as detailed more fully below.

The invention concerns data processing in which meta-data is generated for a directory which includes multiple data files. The meta-data is generated by searching the meta-data of the data files for a common meta-data item whose content is included in all of the data files, and extracting the common meta-data item. The meta-data for the directory is generated using the common meta-data item, and the generated meta-data is attached to directory data.

In entering the rejection over Carter, the Office Action acknowledged that Carter does not explicitly teach the generation of meta-data for a directory by using a meta-data item having content which is common to all of the meta-data. Relying on the reconciliation process described at lines 45 to 50 of Carter's column 36, the Office Action took the position that such a feature would have been obvious.

As understood by Applicants, in the reconciliation process described in Carter's column 36, a master cloud parses a reconciliation log and performs a series of

interacting operations between its local cloud and a remote cloud so as to reconcile changes in files stored both on the local cloud and the remote cloud. The reconciliation log includes an inode which (as described at column 11) is a data structure that stores file meta-data. It was said that the inode is a common attribute for all extracted files. Applicants respectfully submit that even if such a reading is correct (which is not conceded), the extracted inode information is not thereafter "attached to directory data as meta-data corresponding to data files belonging to the directory", as otherwise specified in the claims. Rather, as seen by Applicants, the inode information of Carter is used during the reconciliation process, and is thereafter simply discarded.

Moreover, whatever significance might be attached to Carter's inode information, it is clear that Carter does not describe any process for searching meta-data of data files for a common meta-data item whose content is included in all of the data files. As best understood, for example, Carter's reconciliation process proceeds serially through the reconciliation log, one entry at a time. There is no searching of the reconciliation log, and certainly there is no searching of the reconciliation log for a common meta-data item whose content is included in all of the data files.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all claims are fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael K. Difil

Attorney for Applicants

Registration No. 30622

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-2200
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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